THE FOUNDATION OF True Preaching Asserted.

In Opposition to a *Counterfeit Sermon* pretended to be Preached before the People called **Quakers**, in the *Park, Southwark*, 27th of 9th 1687.

That all those that feign themselves Ministers of the Gospel Dispensation, may see that all Preaching without the Holy Spirit, and a Real Call by the Grace of God, working in their Hearts, and immediately leading them thereto; is nothing but the meer Notion of their own Brains, and not for the Advancement of Pure Religion.

By **R. S.**

If any Man Speak, let him Speak as the Oracles of God: If any Man Minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth; That God in all things may be Glorified through Jesus Christ: To whom be Praise and Dominion forever and ever, Amen. 1 Pet. 4. 11.

LONDON,
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To the

READER.

I Hope that no Person will believe that that Counterfeit Sermon was Preached by any Person that was call'd a QUAKER, but will think that it was a meer Fiction, as it really was. And the Author, in my hearing Confessed, *It was a little Trick, or a Nack, to get Money.*

And therefore in Answering which, I

ſhall not inſiſt on any Particular in his Sermon, but to ſhew the Emptineſs and Vanity of all ſuch Preachers and Sermons that are not as the Oracles of God, and from the Ability that God giveth, which is a ſufficient Reprove to this and all that Preach without a real Call.

R. S.

The

THE FOUNDATION OF True Preaching Asserted, &c.

THE Holy Scriptures, and the Histories of the Primitive Times, do abundantly Demonstrate and set forth by what Means and Methods the Gospel of Christ, which is the Power of God to Salvation, made its own way into the World; and how the Preachers thereof were Qualified, and Unassisted by any Secular Power or Interest, Triumphed over all Opposition that was made against it; and at the appearance of which, the Religion of the *Gentiles*, that was the standing Religion of the *Roman Empire* many Years together, sunk away into Obscurity, and the Darkness of *Pagan* Idolatry and Superstition fled away, and as the Light of the Gospel prevailed, the clearer it discovered the Folly and Impiety of their Worship, their Solemn Rites appeared more Trifling, their Sacrifices more Barbarous and Inhumane, their Oracles became Mute and Silent, and the very Priest Ashamed.

That it was not by Humane Learning, School Divinity, or the Notions of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, but by the alone Power

Power and Wisdom of God: And the Preachers of the Gospel being Divinely Inspired by the Holy Ghost, called of God as was *Aaron*, Qualified by his Grace in their Hearts, as will appear hereafter.

God who in former Times communicated the Law to the Children of *Israel*, by the Ministry of *Moses*, in the Wilderness, from Mount *Sinai*, after a long Succession of many Ages, for the great Blessing of the Promised Seed, thought meet in his own appointed time to put an end thereto, and to perform the Mercies Promised to the Fathers, and accordingly in or about the Year of the World Four Thousand, and the declining part of the Reign of *Augustus*, the Empire enjoying a Universal Peace, God sent his dear Son, as an Ambassador from Heaven, to Reconcile the World, and having fulfilled the Law, and the Righteousness thereof, for which he was sent, to put a Period, and to enlarge the Bounds of Salvation, to admit both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to the terms of the Gospel, and being the Mediator between God and Man, he Preached the Gospel of Repentance, and the Remission of Sins, to all them that obey his heavenly Message.

And having approved himself, and the excellency of his Doctrine, by many great and wonderful Signs & Miracles, he gave Commission to his Disciples, and his Power and Presence for their Assistance, in his saying, *Math.* 28. *All Power in Heaven and Earth is given unto me, go ye therefore and Teach all Nations, Baptizing them,* Εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, in Nomen, *into the Name of Father, Son and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have Commanded you; and lo I am with you always unto the end of the World, Amen.* In which there is two things to be considered, first his Command, *Go ye Teach, Baptizing all Nations*

tions into the Name (that is, into the Power and Vertue) but ſome may ſay, *That the Work to Baptize is Chriſts, and not Mans*; to wipt off that, I anſwer, to Baptize with the Spirit, though not wrought without Chriſt and his Grace, is many times inſtrumentally done by Men fitted of God for that purpoſe, and therefore no Abſurdity follows, that to Baptize with the Spirit ſhould be expreſſed, as the action of the Apoſtle; for though it be Chriſt, by his Grace, that gives Spiritual Gifts, yet the Apoſtle tells of his imparting to them ſome Spiritual Gifts, *Rom.* 1. 11, And the *Corinthians*, *That he had begotten them through the Goſpel*, 1 Cor. 4. 15, And yet to beget People to the Faith is the Work of Chriſt, not of Men; to Convert the Heart is properly the Work of Chriſt, and yet the Spirit oft-times aſcribes it to Men, as being the Inſtruments; and the Apoſtle was ſent to turn Men from Darkneſs to Light, from Satans Power to God, though that be not done without Chriſt Co-operating by his Grace; and in like manner may Baptizing with the Spirit be expreſſed, as performable by Man, as the Inſtrument, though the Work of Chriſts Grace be needful as the principal Cauſe; ſo that it is no abſurdity to ſay, *That the Apoſtles did adminiſter the Baptiſm of the Spirit.*

Secondly, his Promiſe, *And lo I am with you to the end of the World*; which is a lively Demonſtration, that the Church and People of Chriſt ſhall never want his Preſence by his Spirit to Inſtruct and Aſſiſt them, whether to Preach or to Pray, he will be with them; and he tells his Diſciples, *As my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you*; here we may ſee the Apoſtles had an immediate Call to the Miniſtry, to Preach the Goſpel; yet they were to wait for the Holy Ghoſt to be poured on them, as a further Commiſſion;

and

and in pursuance of his Command they met at *Jerusalem* to receive Power from on high, and being met, they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with new Tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance: By this Commission the Apostle *Peter*, and the other Apostles, being filled with the Holy Ghost, as the best Qualification, Preached to both *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and afterwards the Apostle *Peter* visiting, by his Epistle, the scattered Disciples, saith, *As every man hath received the Gift, even so Minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God: If any man Speak, let him Speak as the Oracles of God: If any man Minister, let him do it as of the Ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be Glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be Praise and Dominion forever and ever, Amen.*

By which we may see that the true Preachers of the Gospel of Christ, which is the Power of God to Salvation, was not made Ministers thereof by Human Learning, but by the inward Power and Vertue of the Spirit of God in their own hearts drawing them thereunto; such Ministers we own as are called immediatly by the Grace of God, but all those that come in without the Call, Moving and Leadings of the Spirit of Christ, come in not by Christ, who is the Door into the Sheepfold, but clime up some other way; and therefore Christ proclaims them Thieves and Robers, whom the Sheep ought not to hear; such Ministers and Preachers we utterly disown and deny.

And we may further observe, that these that Minister, must Minister according to the Gift and Grace received; but thay that have not such a Gift, cannot Minister according thereunto, and as good Stewards of the Grace of God; but how can a man be a good Steward of that which he

he hath not; can Ungodly Men and Wicked Preachers, that are not Gracious themselves, but live more like *Gentiles* then *Christians*, in that they strive to imitate the one, rather then to live the Life of the other, and think it strange that others run not with them into the same Excess of the *Gentiles*, which is Lasciviousness, Lust, Excess of Wine, Revilings, Banquetings, and abominable Idolatry, be good Steward of the manifold Grace of God? and therefore in the following Verses he makes an Exclusive Limitation of such as are not thus furnished, saying, *If any man Speak, let him Speak as the Oracles of God, and if any man Minister, let him do it as of the ability that God giveth*; which is as much as if he had said, they that cannot thus Speak and thus Minister ought not to do it, seeing no man ought to take this Honour to himself, but he that was called of God, as was *Aaron*: For the Particle [*If*] denotes a Necessary Condition. Now what this Abilyty is doth appear from the former Words, to wit the Gift Received, and the Grace whereof they are Stewards, as by the immediate concern and dependency of the Words doth demonstrate; Neither can it be understood of a mere Natural Ability, or acquired Parts and Learning, because man in this Posture, in this Natural State and Condition knoweth not the things of God, and so he cannot Minister them to others, of what he is Ignorant himself, and the following Words shew and Illustrate this also, in that he immediately Subjoyned, *That God in all things may be Glorified*: But surely God is not Glorified but greatly dishonoured when Wicked men undertake to Preach, notwithstanding their great Learning, and acquier Parts, and from their meer natural Ability meddle in Spiritual things which they neither Know nor Understand, as saith the

Apoſtle, *As no Man knoweth the Mind of a Man, but the Spirit of a Man; ſo no Man knoweth the things of God, but by the Spirit.*

Thus far we may ſee how the Goſpel of Jeſus Chriſt was Preached in the Purity of it without any Mixtures of ſelf Wiſdom, Human Learning, School Divinity, or the Notions of *Plato* or *Ariſtotle*; but they that Preached Speak as the Oracles of God, and thoſe that did Miniſter, did it of the Ability that God had given them, that God in all things might be glorified.

But When the Power and Life of Religion went down, up went Schools of Learning, and the Phyloſophy of the *Gentiles* embraced, and Mens Religion was turn'd into Notions, out of the Heart into the Head, and they forgot the Command of Chriſt, who ſaid, *Obſerve all things whatſoever I have Commanded you, and lo I am with you to the end the World*; but he is not with thoſe that breaks his Commandements, and will have none of his Counſel, nor obey his Doctrine, which was, *Abide in me, and I in you; as the Branch cannot bear Fruit of it ſelf, except it abides in the Vine; no more can ye except ye abide in me. I am the Vine, ye are the Branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the ſame bringeth forth much Fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If any man abide not in me, he is caſt forth as a Brand, and is Withered.*

So all thoſe that abide not in Chriſt are caſt forth and withered, and in that withered State and Condition they Preach the Figments of their own Brain, being Qualified with Humane Learning, and School Divinity, and the Wiſdom which this World teacheth, which the Apoſtle *Paul* utterly Rejected and Reproved, *Acts* 17. both at *Athens*, (being then the moſt Famous Univerſity in the World)

World) and at *Corinth*, a famous City of *Greece*; to the Philosophers and Orators he taught nothing among them, but Christ Crucified; to the *Jews* a Stumbling-block, and to the *Greeks* Foolishness, but to them that believe, both *Jews* and *Greeks*, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God, 1 *Cor.* 1. And that he made use of to Convert those that were counted the Wits of the World: So in 1 *Cor.* 2. He plainly Renounces and Rejects the Wisdom of it, saying,

Vers. 1. *And I Brethren when I came to you, came not with excellency of Speech or Wisdom, declaring unto you the Testimony of God.*

2. *For I determine not to know any thing among you, but Jesus Christ, and him Crucified.*

3. *And I was with you in Weakness, and Fear, and much Trembling.*

4. *And my Speech was not with enticing Words of Mans Wisdom, but in demonstration of that Spirit and Power.*

5. *That your Faith should not stand in the Wisdom of Man, but in the Power of God.*

6. *Howbeit we speak Wisdom among them that are Perfect, yet not the Wisdom of this World, nor of the Prince of this World wich comes to naught.*

7. *But we speak the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom.*

V. 13. *Which things also we speak, not in the Words which Mans Wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth; comparing Spiritual things wich Spiritual things.*

By which we may see, that the Apostle made use of no other Philosophy then the Wisdom of Christ, in comparison of which the Wits of *Athens*, and the Learning of the whole World is but Foolishness, and as Dross and Dung in comparison of the Cross of Christ.

And

And in our Age especially God hath determined to show his Power by weak Instruments, which he hath raised up, and hath furnished them with his own Power, Life, and Vertue, though dispised, because Mean and Illeterate; and therefore seeing in and amongst them my self with many others, have found that heavenly Pearl, that giveth Contentment, which is the only Learning, to be sought after, and waited for, forever and ever.

THE END